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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

FROM: BERLIN

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 499, DECEMBER 6, 8 P.M.

SENT BONN 432, DEPARTMENT 499, REPEATED INFORMATION PARIS 142,  
LONDON 147, MOSCOW UNNUMBERED.

WEST BERLIN TEMPER REPORT:

(A) LEADERSHIP

ALTHOUGH BERLIN POLITICAL AND PUBLIC OPINION LEADERS SATISFIED THAT HEAT IS OFF BERLIN AS RESULT CAMP DAVID DISCUSSIONS, THEY BELIEVE THAT MORE DANGEROUS PHASE OF CRISIS STILL AHEAD IN VIEW UNCHANGED SOV AIM INCORPORATE WEST BERLIN IN COMMUNIST SPHERE OF INFLUENCE AS INDICATED KHRUSHCHEV'S RECENT BUDAPEST SPEECH. BERLIN LEADERSHIP WELCOMED POSTPONEMENT SUMMIT MEETING AS RESULT DE GAULLE'S INTERCESSION BECAUSE IT FELT DETAILED PREPARATION WESTERN POSITION BEFORE SUMMIT ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL, ESPECIALLY IN VIEW REPORTED DIFFERENCES OF OPINION RE CONFERENCE TACTICS BETWEEN FRANCE-FEDREP ON ONE SIDE AND US-UK ON OTHER.

LEADERS, INCLUDING MAYORS BRANDT AND AMREHN, HAVE MISGIVINGS RE WHAT THEY BELIEVE IS (1) PRESENT LESS FIRM WESTERN POSITION COMPARED WITH STRONG UNEQUIVOCAL SUPPORT FOR BERLIN IN PARIS STATEMENTS DEC 14 AND 16, 1958; (2) OVER-EAGERNESS ON PART OF WEST TO NEGOTIATE; (3) POSSIBILITY THAT IN NEXT ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS WEST MAY MAKE FURTHER CONCESSIONS TO ACHIEVE "COMPROMISE SOLUTION" ON BERLIN; (4) DEMAND BY SOVS THAT WEST PAY ADVANCE PRICE FOR RELAXATION OF TENSIONS WITHOUT EQUIVALENT SOV PAYMENT. ANY RELAXATION BOUGHT WITH RETREAT WESTERN POSITION ON BERLIN OR ELSEWHERE, BERLIN LEADERS BELIEVE, WILL BE SHORT-LIVED BECAUSE SOVS CERTAIN LATER EXPLOIT ADVANTAGES GAINED NOW.

WHILE LEADERS HAVE FULL UNDERSTANDING FOR AMERICAN EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE RELAXATION OF TENSIONS BY INTRODUCING NEW TONE INTO

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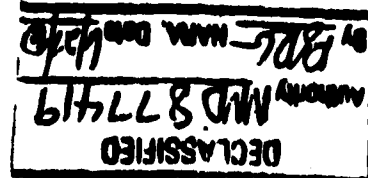
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EAST-WEST RELATIONS, THEY CONCERNED OVER WHAT THEY CONSIDER EXCESSIVELY DEFENSIVE POSTURE OF WEST. IRRESPECTIVE OF PARTY AFFILIATION THEY STRONGLY FEEL WEST'S REBUTTAL OF SOV PROPAGANDA AND SPURIOUS LEGAL ARGUMENTS (SUCH AS CONTAINED IN SOV NOTE OF NOV 11) SHOULD BE UNEQUIVOCAL AND IMMEDIATE, LEST SOVS SUCCEED WITH WELL-TRIED PROPAGANDA AXIOM THAT IF A LIE REPEATED OFTEN ENOUGH AND WITHOUT IMMEDIATE ANTIDOTE SOME PEOPLE WILL BELIEVE IT. THEY WORRIED THAT SOVS HAVE ALREADY SCORED BY SHIFTING FOCUS OF DISCUSSION FROM "ALL-GERMAN PROBLEM" TO "ALL-BERLIN PROBLEM," AND NOW TO "ISSUE OF WEST BERLIN."

BERLIN LEADERS CONVINCED IT MISTAKE TO ATTEMPT "BERLIN SOLUTION" BECAUSE SOVS UNLIKELY PERMIT IMPROVEMENT OF STATUS OF WEST BERLIN; ANY CHANGE IN OCCUPATION STATUS THEREFORE LIKELY RESULT IN DETERIORATION BERLIN SITUATION. IN THEIR OPINION, TOLERABLE MODUS VIVENDI ON BERLIN CAN ONLY BE FOUND IF WEST STAKES OUT NOW (RPT NOW) STRONG ADVANCE POSITION FOR NEGOTIATING PURPOSES; SUCH MODUS VIVENDI SHOULD NOT BE ON INTERIM BASIS BUT REMAIN IN FORCE UNTIL GERMAN REUNIFICATION. BERLIN LEADERSHIP BELIEVES PROPER NEGOTIATION PRIORITY IS : (1) RELAXATION OF TENSIONS; (2) DISARMAMENT AND RELATED ISSUES; (3) GERMAN PROBLEM INCLUDING BERLIN. IN CONNECTION WITH LATTER THEY BELIEVE WEST SHOULD UNDERLINE THAT RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION TO WHICH SOVS HAVE SUBSCRIBED IN UN CHARTER AND WHICH THEY SO VOCIFEROUSLY APPLY TO PEOPLES OF AFRICA AND ASIA MUST ALSO BE APPLIED TO GERMAN PEOPLE.

BERLIN LEADERS INCREASINGLY CONCERNED RE SOV CONCENTRATION ON SEVERING EXISTING WEST BERLIN-FEDREP TIES AND OPENLY WORRIED RE LONG-RANGE CONSEQUENCES ANY SUCH DEVELOPMENT; EVEN THOUGH WEST SUCCEEDS IN MAINTAINING BASIC FREEDOMS IN WEST BERLIN, SEVERING WEST BERLIN-FEDREP TIES WOULD RESULT IN LOSS OF CONFIDENCE IN FUTURE OF CITY WHICH WOULD IN TURN PRODUCE POLITICAL-ECONOMIC STAGNATION AND EVENTUAL DECAY. MOREOVER, LOCAL LEADERS CONVINCED THAT IF ALLIED POWERS FAIL MAINTAIN STATUS OF BERLIN AS FUTURE CAPITAL REUNITED GERMANY IMPRESSION

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MIGHT BE CREATED THAT ALLIES ARE WRITING OFF GERMAN REUNIFICATION POLICY. WHILE GERMANS REALIZE THAT FEASIBILITY REUNIFICATION NOW FURTHER REMOVED THAN EVER, THEY EXPECT ALLIED, ESPECIALLY US, SUPPORT IN KEEPING REUNIFICATION QUESTION BEFORE FORUM WORLD PUBLIC OPINION AND IN CONSTANTLY REMINDING SOVS THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES IN THIS RESPECT.

PUBLIC BELIEF THAT ALLIES SEEKING ADJUSTMENT TO EXISTENCE OF TWO GERMANY'S, COMBINED WITH DOUBTS RE US ABILITY PROVIDE SECURITY FOR FEDREP IN VIEW USSR'S SPECTACULAR TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES, WOULD, BERLIN LEADERS FEAR, REMOVE TWO IMPORTANT PROPS FROM US-GERMAN ALLIANCE AND GIVE IMPETUS TO THOSE WHO ADVOCATE INDEPENDENT GERMAN ACCOMMODATION WITH EASTERN BLOC.

(B) GENERAL PUBLIC

BERLINERS' CONFIDENCE IN US PROMISE MAINTAIN THEIR FREEDOM CONTINUES HIGH AND THERE NO OVERT SIGNS OF ANXIETY AMONG POPULATION. ACCORDING POLITICAL AND TRADE UNION LEADERS WITH GOOD GRASS ROOTS CONTACTS, POPULATION CONTINUES CAREFUL WAIT AND SEE ATTITUDE; THESE LEADERS ALSO REPORT THEY ARE FREQUENTLY QUESTIONED RE SIGNIFICANCE PRESS REPORTS ON CHANGED EMPHASIS US FOREIGN POLICY NOT ONLY TOWARD SOVS, BUT ALSO TOWARD RED CHINA. ALTHOUGH PRESS COMMENT FROM TIME TO TIME POINTS UP DANGEROUS ELEMENTS OF POSSIBLE EAST-WEST COMPROMISE RE BERLIN, GENERAL POPULAR BELIEF IS THAT LIFE WILL GO ON AS USUAL. LEADERS JUDGE BERLIN POPULATION TO BE STEADFAST AS EVER BUT ARE WORRIED THAT THIS STATE OF CONFIDENCE MIGHT RECEIVE SEVERE JOLT IF EAST ABLE GET AWAY WITH SOME ACTION AGAINST WEST BERLIN.

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